



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/796,697 | 03/09/2004 | Benoit Abribat | U 0164-F04A | 2889 |

23657 7590 11/29/2005

COGNIS CORPORATION
PATENT DEPARTMENT
300 BROOKSIDE AVENUE
AMBLER, PA 19002

EXAMINER

CLARDY, S

| | |
|----------|--------------|
| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

1617

DATE MAILED: 11/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/796,697 | Applicant(s) ABRIBAT ET AL. | |
| | Examiner S. Mark Clardy | Art Unit 1617 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/2/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claims 1-38 are pending in this application which claims benefit of US Provisional Application 60/453,768, filed March 11, 2003.

Applicants' claims are drawn to a microemulsion composition consisting essentially of (claims 1-12) or comprising (claims 14-25) the following components, methods of using the microemulsions (claims 13, 26), and methods of mixing them with agrochemicals (claims 27-38). The microemulsion components are:

Oil¹

Hydrophilic emulsifier²

Lipophilic co-emulsifier³

Optional customary additives⁴

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 2-6 and 28, 29, 31, 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Using open claim language ("comprising") in the dependent claims renders the normally limited scope of the phrase "consisting essentially of" in claims 1 and 28 void. Either the independent claims should be amended to read "comprising", or the dependent claims should be amended to match the language of the independent claims.

Claims 10-11, and 23-24 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 1 and 14, respectively. When two claims in an application are duplicates or

¹ Claims 2-4: comprising fatty acid ester (methyl olate or laurate; mineral, vegetable, paraffinic, or silicone oils)

² Claims 5-6: comprising alkyl polyglycosides

³ Claims 7-8: selected from glycerol or sorbitan esters such as glycerol monooleate or sorbitan monolaurate

Art Unit: 1617

else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k). The intended use recited in claims 1 and 14 (“for use as an adjuvant with agrochemicals”) is not given any patentable weight; the compositions have been examined simply as microemulsions comprising the three components cited above. No composition claims have been presented which actually have an agrochemical as part of the composition. Merely describing how the adjuvant microemulsion compositions may be used (“as an adjuvant with agrochemicals”) does not place the agrochemicals in the compositions.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-12, 14-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller et al (US 6,586,479).

Miller et al teach microemulsion (“fine emulsion”, col 1, lines 12-16) adjuvant compositions comprising emulsifiers such as sorbitan esters (col 2, lines 42-46), nonionic surfactants such as alkylpolyglycosides (col 4, lines 39-48), oils such as fatty acid esters (col 5, lines 30-38), and carriers such as vegetable oils, natural and hydrogenated oils, and liquid paraffins (col 6-7). The adjuvants are useful in combination with fungicidal active agents (col 7,

⁴ Claim 12: antifreeze agents, dyes, thickening agents, antifoam agents, inorganic salts

Art Unit: 1617

lines 4-9). Thus applicants' components were known to have utility in making microemulsion compositions.

Claims 1-12, 14-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Klier et al (US 5,538,662).

Klier et al teach microemulsion compositions comprising gelling agent, organic solvent(s), and surfactant(s) (col 3, lines 12-14), wherein the solvents may be esters such as methyl laurate or methyl oleate (col 4, lines 18-47), or aliphatic hydrocarbons such as mineral oils or paraffin oils (lines 49-55). Nonionic surfactants include glycerol and alkyl polyglycosides (col 6, lines 23-43). Optional components include dyes, disinfectants, and fungicides, among others (lines 57-67). Thus applicants' components were known to have utility in making microemulsion compositions.

Claims 1-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined teachings of Capuzzi et al (US 5,905,072) and Auda et al (US 6,586,366).

Capuzzi et al teach adjuvants for microemulsion fungicidal compositions (abstract) comprising methyl esters of fatty acids, anionic surface active agents such as sulfosuccinates, at least one nonionic surface active agent such as alkyl polyglucosides, and at least one additional nonionic surfactant such as sorbitan esters of fatty acids (col 1, lines 38-67; col 2, lines 44-62). The adjuvant microemulsions may also contain additives such as antifreeze and antifoam agents (col 3, lines 18-23), and active agents such as phytodrugs, phytohormones, weed killers, insecticides, and fertilizers (col 4, lines 35-38).

Auda et al teach oil based emulsifiable concentrates and agrochemical formulations comprising at least one oil component, at least one saccharide surfactant, and at least one other

Art Unit: 1617

nonionic surfactant (col 1, lines 9-15). When the composition contains water, it will form a microemulsion (lines 43-49). The oil component may be a mineral or vegetable oil, or a fatty acid ester such as methyl or ethyl laurate (lines 50-65). The saccharide surfactant may be an alkyl polyglucoside (col 2, lines 52-53). Other components may include antifoaming agents (col 3, line 35) and agrochemical agents such as herbicides, pesticides, insecticides, fungicides, or acaricides (lines 60-63), such as the herbicide glyphosate (columns 5-6).

One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to combine these references because they disclose the same adjuvant materials as having utility in making microemulsion agrochemical compositions.

Thus it would have been *prima facie* obvious to the ordinary artisan at the time the invention was made to have combined applicants' oil, hydrophilic emulsifier, lipophilic co-emulsifier and customary additives into a single microemulsion composition because the prior art teaches that these components, and specific examples thereof as claimed herein, were known to be combinable in a single composition in order to produce a microemulsion composition which was useful for combining with agrochemicals.

No unobvious or unexpected results are noted; no claim is allowed.

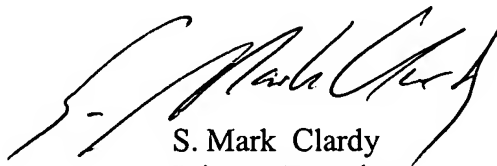
This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to S. Mark Clardy whose telephone number is 571-272-0611. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-5:00.

Art Unit: 1617

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sreenivasan Padmanabhan can be reached on 571-272-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



S. Mark Clardy
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1617

November 23, 2005